



Moss & Barnett

May 25, 2018

Marlene H. Dortch  
Federal Communications Division  
Office of the Secretary  
445 12th St. SW, Room TW-A325  
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Withdrawal of MTA Section 63.71 Application to Discontinue BETRS Service

Dear Ms. Dortch:

Matanuska Telephone Association, Inc. ("MTA") formally withdraws the Section 63.71 Application to Discontinue BETRS Service filed on December 17, 2017.

MTA has worked diligently with its customers, the Federal Communications Commission ("FCC"), the Regulatory Commission of Alaska ("RCA") and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough ("Borough") to resolve concerns and transition customers to alternative services. Most customers appreciated the generous notice and compensation provided by MTA and disconnected without issue.<sup>1</sup> MTA provided exceptional customer and technical service to members transitioning from BETRS service.<sup>2</sup>

As previously documented by MTA, the underlying assets and spectrum have been sold to another carrier.<sup>3</sup> MTA worked with the purchasing carrier and arranged to purchase the service on a wholesale basis. MTA will allow existing customers to continue to purchase the service.<sup>4</sup> Previous customers may reconnect for a \$400 fee to recover MTA's payment.<sup>5</sup> MTA will not repair or replace any failing equipment.

MTA continues to believe it was better to course to discontinue BETRS service with a clear and predictable end, but MTA also appreciates the feedback it has received during this process. When the equipment fails, there will be a sudden failure of service. To the extent that customers are willing to assume the risk, MTA is willing to facilitate the continuation of this service.

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<sup>1</sup> MTA provided more than six months' notice and an automatic payment of \$400 upon disconnection.

<sup>2</sup> See Affidavit of Clint Spencer, filed March 26, 2018.

<sup>3</sup> See Application and *Ex Partes* filed on March 26, 2018 and April 6, 2018.

<sup>4</sup> MTA is evaluating the appropriate cost-based price for this service.

<sup>5</sup> Only customers connected to the system as of December 15, 2017, the date of MTA's Discontinuation Application will be eligible to reconnect to the system.

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MTA appreciates all of the work and effort that FCC staff has committed to this issue. This has been a rigorous process for MTA staff. We remain dedicated to the best interest of the cooperative.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you'd like to discuss the withdrawal of our Discontinuation Application. MTA continues to believe the failing BETRS system is an ongoing problem in rural America and a discontinuation path is an important public policy issue.

Very truly yours,



**Shannon M. Heim**

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SMH/smh

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